



V. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

As a function of “Maryland’s Streamlined Environmental and Regulatory Process” and to gather input from and inform citizens within the project area, the Authority held and participated in a variety of public involvement activities.

1. Alternates Public Workshop

The Authority held an Alternates Public Workshop on November 18, 2003 at the Perry Hall Middle School. The purpose of the workshop was to acquaint the public with the need for the project and present the status of the Section 100 Project as of that date. At the workshop, the preliminary alternates were introduced. These alternates included the No-Build Alternate, the General Purpose Lanes Alternate, and the Managed Lanes Alternate. A preliminary assessment of environmental impacts associated with each of these alternates was also presented.

The public input generated as a result of the public workshop was reviewed by the project team and, where appropriate, incorporated into the development of the Alternates Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS).

2. Focus Groups

A fifteen-member Focus Group, comprised of local residents, community leaders, and business owners, was formed in Fall 2003 to provide an opportunity for the public to provide input and comments on a variety of issues related to the Section 100 project, including purpose and need, alternates under consideration, and potential environmental impacts.

A total of six Focus Group Meetings were held during development and refinement of alternates.

- September 11, 2003 - Background information on the I-95 Master Plan was presented, the Section 100 Project was introduced, and possible options for the project were discussed.
- September 30, 2003 - The project team presented their initial designs for both the General Purpose Lanes and Managed Lanes Alternates.
- October 27, 2003 - The project team proposed the elimination of the collector-distributor (C-D) lanes based on results of additional traffic and engineering analyses. The Focus Group agreed that the C-D lanes should be eliminated from further analysis, as they would not improve the alternates’ ability to meet the project needs, would not provide the originally intended function, and would increase natural environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts.
- February 24, 2004 - During this meeting, the General Purpose Lanes and Managed Lanes Alternates (without C-D lanes) were presented, along with the preferred interchange options. The presentation included examples of computer-generated three-dimensional (3D) images that could be used to graphically display the alternates at the Summer 2004 Public Hearing.



- April 27, 2004 - A fifth Focus Group Meeting was held to present the results of the additional detailed engineering and environmental studies, and gather additional input on the upcoming Public Hearing.
- June 8, 2004 - A sixth Focus Group Meeting was held to present and gather input and feedback on the displays to be viewed at the Public Hearing.

3. Public Hearing

The Authority held a Public Hearing on June 29, 2004 at the Perry Hall Middle School. As part of the Hearing, Authority staff presented displays, including a display that specifically addressed ETLs, and distributed literature and information addressing the Section 100 project. The purpose of the Public Hearing was to provide information on the project and allow all interested persons the opportunity to present their views regarding the proposed location and general design of the project alternates, as well as the associated social, economic and natural environmental effects. The main issues raised by the comments included:

- Noise issues along the entire portion of Section 100;
- Noted support for new transit initiatives within the study area.
- Concerns that the improvements would decrease safety of the roadway;
- Support for Alternate 1: No-Build;
- Support for the Alternate 3: Managed Lanes.

4. Public Outreach

In addition to the Alternate Public Workshop and Public Hearing, the Authority participated in other public involvement activities. On June 23 and 27, 2004, the Authority staff handed out fliers and answered questions at the White Marsh Mall to advertise for and answer questions about the Public Hearing on June 29, 2004. On July 31, 2004 and October 2, 2004, Authority staff attended the Garden Village Community Festival and the Baltimore County Community Waterfront Festival, respectively, to answer questions concerning the Section 100 project.

Additional coordination with local officials and resource agencies has been undertaken to obtain data on parklands, emergency services, potential low-income and minority populations, wild and scenic rivers, and rare, threatened, and endangered species. The study team will continue to coordinate with local, State, and Federal resource and regulatory agencies throughout the remaining planning stages of this project. Copies of that correspondence are provided in Appendix C of the Environmental Assessment document prepared for this project. The Public Hearing transcript, as well as correspondence dated after the issuance of the EA, is included in Appendix G.